

# A DICTIONARY OF IRISH ARTISTS

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ADAMS, PHILIP (*d.* 1780-1810). *Sculptor.*

Was only son of Richard Adams, merchant, of Carlow. He entered the Dublin Society's drawing school on 5th May, 1774, and in 1779 was awarded a silver medal for practical geometry. He was also a pupil of Edward Smyth, the sculptor, and as such sent to the exhibition of the Society of Artists in William Street, in 1780, a bas-relief model of "Minerva conducting Genius to the Temple of Fame." He worked as a sculptor for some years in Townsend Street, chiefly as a carver of marble chimney-pieces.

The "Hibernian Journal" of January 4th, 1792, contains the following advertisement concerning a bust of the Prince of Wales: "Philip Adams, having lately visited London for the purpose of introducing this admirable model to the notice of the admirers of the fine arts in this kingdom and to the friends of His Royal Highness in particular, has now an opportunity of being the instrument of presenting to the nobility and gentry an excellent model of H.R.H. George Prince of Wales, which may be seen at 41 Townsend Street, where subscriptions for the busto are now being drawn. A few marble chimney-

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pieces to be sold." Adams was well known as a mimic and his company was sought as an entertaining and humorous companion. J. D. Herbert, in his "Irish Varieties," refers to him as "a celebrated mimic and sculptor."

Relinquishing his profession as a sculptor he entered himself as a student in Gray's Inn on the 13th June, 1795, and was called to the English Bar on 13th May, 1801. In Michaelmas term, 1804, he was called to the Irish Bar. A notice of him in the "Hibernian Magazine" (April, 1811) says "his practice lay very much in the business of liberating insolvent debtors; . . . he was impelled to forward the deliverance of the unhappy debtor from motives of the noblest generosity and the purest spirit of humanity." He died in Mary Street in October, 1810, and was buried on the 28th at St. Mary's Church. The "Hibernian Magazine" (March, 1811) refers to him as a very singular and eccentric character who had raised himself "from a humble artisan to a barrister pleading before the Judges of the land." His portrait is in the "Hibernian Magazine" for March, 1811.

AHERON, JOHN (*d.* 1762). *Architectural Draughtsman.*

An architect practising in Ireland in the first half of the 18th century. In 1754 he published in Dublin, by subscription, "A General Treatise of Architecture," in five books, "printed for the Author by John Butler on Cork Hill, 1754." This work was profusely illustrated from drawings by the author, the more important being engraved by himself, the others by J. Booth. The manuscript, beautifully written in imitation of printing, is in the British Museum. At the end is a note: "This work was written and drawn

with pen and ink and finished the 13th April, A.D. 1751, by John Aheron." A similar manuscript work, in six books, was in the possession of Messrs. Batsford of London in 1909. In Peter Wilson's "Dublin Magazine," 1762, are engravings after drawings by Aheron of "Steevens' Hospital," "Mercer's Hospital," "The Charter School, Clontarf," "The Hospital for Incurables," and "St. Patrick's Hospital." Aheron died at his lodgings in Long Acre while on a visit to London, in January, 1761-2.

AITKEN, JAMES ALFRED, A.R.H.A. (*b.* 1846, *d.* 1897). *Landscape Painter.*

Was born in Edinburgh on 5th November, 1846. From his childhood he showed a talent for art and he became a pupil of Horatio MacCulloch, R.S.A., whose work exercised an influence upon him as a painter. His family removing to Dublin he entered as a student in the Royal Dublin Society's school under Henry MacManus (*q.v.*) and in 1865 commenced to exhibit at the Royal Hibernian Academy. He was elected an Associate on 1st March, 1871; but in 1872 he left Dublin and took up his residence in Glasgow, having married in September of that year Anne, second daughter of Alexander Miller, a Glasgow merchant. He was a regular exhibitor at the Glasgow Institute and at the Royal Scottish Academy, and was one of the founders of the Glasgow "Pen and Pencil Club." He attained considerable success as a landscape painter in oil and was also successful in water-colour, and was a member of the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Water-colour. He died at 116 Mains Street, Glasgow, on 21st December, 1897. A small landscape by him is in the National Gallery of Ireland.

ALDAY, PAUL (*f.* 1809-1827). *Amateur.*

He was proprietor of a music and pianoforte warehouse at 10 Dame Street and was an amateur violinist and artist. He exhibited with the Society of Artists in Hawkins Street in 1809, and contributed landscapes, mostly in water-colour, to the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1826 and 1827.

ALLAN, HENRY, R.H.A. (*b.* 1865, *d.* 1912).  
*Painter.*

Was born on 18th June, 1865, at Retreat House, Dundalk, County Louth, the youngest son of William Allan and his wife Anne, daughter of the Rev. Solomon Browne, Presbyterian Minister of Castledawson. After studying in Belfast and Dublin he continued his art education at Antwerp and elsewhere abroad. On returning to Ireland about 1889 he lived for a year or two in Downpatrick, and then took up his residence in Dublin where he spent the rest of his life. He began to exhibit in the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1889, sending in that and the following year small pictures of Dutch Interiors. In 1893 his "Little Matchseller," exhibited in the Academy, gained for him the Albert Prize. Allan's early works were full of promise, showing an artistic sense and painter-like qualities; but his later pictures, weak imitations of the French landscape painters, were poor and without vigour. He essayed portraiture, but with little success. He was elected an Associate of the Academy on 18th April, 1895, and a Member on the 18th January, 1901. On the death of P. V. Duffy he was made Treasurer. He died, after a long illness, in Leinster Road, Rathmines, on the 2nd September, 1912, and was buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery where his father and mother were also interred.

**ALMENT, MARY MARTHA** (*b.* 1834, *d.* 1908).  
*Landscape Painter.*

Born in Londonderry on 9th April, 1834. She was a pupil in the Metropolitan School of Art under Henry MacManus, and for many years was an exhibitor of landscapes in the Royal Hibernian Academy. She also painted a few portraits and was much employed as a teacher in Dublin. She died on 11th April, 1908. She was aunt of Elizabeth Alment, an artist and teacher, now living.

**ALPENNY, (or HALFPENNY), JOSEPH SAMUEL** (*b.* 1787, *d.* 1858). *Water-colour Painter.*

A native of the south of Ireland, born in 1787. He appears to have learned his art and begun his artistic career in London. His name first appears in 1804, when, as "J. S. Halfpenny," 59 Stafford Place, Pimlico, he was awarded a premium by the Society of Arts for a drawing; and in 1806 he was given a silver palette for a drawing of "Antinous." As "Joseph S. Halfpenny" he exhibited a portrait in the Royal Academy in 1805, and continued to exhibit each year until 1808. In 1810 he was in Waterford and, as "J. S. Halfpenny," sent two drawings to the Society of Artists in Dublin. In 1812 he was living in Dublin, at 13 St. Andrew Street, and contributed seven drawings to the exhibition of the Society of Artists in Hawkins Street. He had now changed his name to "Alpenny." He had thirty-seven drawings at the Hibernian Society's exhibition in 1815 and sixteen the following year. In 1821, when he was living at 99 Great Britain Street, he sent eighteen drawings to the exhibition in the Royal Arcade, and was one of the eleven artists who held an exhibition of water-colours in 1823. Among the works then

shown by him was a drawing of "The Entrance of George IV into Dublin on 17th August, 1821." From this he did an etching, which he published himself at 99 Great Britain Street. Soon afterwards he left Dublin and established himself in London, residing at first at Kew, and afterwards at Richmond and Clapham. In 1825 he had two works in the Royal Academy—"The Ancient Irish hunting the Moose Deer," and "Fear"; and he continued as an exhibitor at intervals until 1853. "Alpenny's New Drawing Book of Rustic Figures, drawn on stone by J. Alpenny," was published by Ackermann in 1825. It contains "A Boy Fishing," "Irish Girl," "Gathering Sea-weed," and "Ellen of Erith." He died in 1858. In the National Gallery of Ireland is a water-colour portrait of Edward Hayes (*q.v.*) by him.

AMBROSE, EDWARD (*b.* 1814, *d.* 1890).

*Sculptor.*

Born in Cork in 1814. He became a student in the Royal Academy, London, in December, 1845, and afterwards studied in Paris, Rome and Louvain. He returned to London about 1851 and resided at 101 Stanhope Street for some years. He was an exhibitor in the Royal Academy in 1851 and 1864, and also in the Royal Hibernian Academy and at Liverpool, where he was awarded a medal. His "Cupid and Psyche" was in the Cork exhibition in 1852. The latter part of his life was passed in Cork, and he died there on 29th April, 1890, aged 76.

ANDREWS, G. (*f.* 1791-1794). *Sculptor.*

A "Statuary" working in Dublin, at 72 Anglesea Street, from 1791 to 1794.

ARCHER, GRAVES CHAMNEY (*d.* 1848).*Amateur.*

Of Mount John, County Wicklow ; son of Thomas Archer and his wife Margaret Lambe, and grandson of Edward Archer of Mount John (died 1777) and his wife Elizabeth, who was daughter of Thomas Chamney of County Wexford and Margaret, daughter of Francis Graves of Drogheda. He exhibited, as an amateur, landscapes and figures at the artists' exhibitions in Hawkins Street in 1810, 1811 and 1812 ; and two landscapes at the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1826. He died on the 31st October, 1848. He was elder brother of Charles Palmer Archer, Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1832-3.

ASHFORD, WILLIAM, P.R.H.A. (*b.* 1746, *d.* 1824). *Landscape Painter.*

Was born in Birmingham in 1746. He came to Ireland in 1764 and settled in Dublin, having obtained an appointment in the Ordnance Office through the interest of the Surveyor-General, Ralph Ward. It is not known where he learned his art ; but in 1767, within three years of his arrival in Dublin, he appeared as an exhibitor at the Society of Artists in William Street, sending from Aston's Quay two flower-pieces in oil. His next appearance was in 1770, when, from his lodgings at "the Indian Queen in Dame Street," he sent pictures of fruit and dead game ; and he exhibited similar subjects in the following year. In the exhibition of 1772 he first showed his powers as a landscape painter, and one of the three pictures he exhibited was awarded the Dublin Society's second premium, Thomas Roberts (*q.v.*) gaining the first. In the following year, 1773, he won the first premium. He continued as a regular contributor to the Society of Artists down to 1780, among his pictures being

“A View of Dawson’s Grove,” 1774; three “Views of Moore Abbey,” 1775; a “View of Chapelizod,” 1777, and “Views of Carton,” “Ruins of Maynooth,” and “Killarney,” 1780. One of his pictures exhibited in the latter year was purchased by the Dublin Society for thirty-five pounds two and sixpence, “as an encouragement to Irish Artists.” In 1789 and 1790 he was in London, and exhibited at the Royal Academy. He had made his first appearance there in 1775, when he sent from the Ordnance Office, Dublin Castle, one landscape, and he continued to exhibit at intervals down to 1811. He was a Fellow of the Society of Artists in London, and contributed to its exhibitions between 1777 and 1791; and also exhibited at the British Institution in 1806, 1808, and 1809. While in London in 1790 he and Dominick Serres held an exhibition of their works. Ashford was a regular contributor to the various exhibitions held in Dublin between 1800 and 1821; and in February, 1819, had a special exhibition of his own works, both pictures and drawings, in the Dublin Society’s House in Hawkins Street, which proved very successful. The Irish Society of Artists elected him its President in 1813. He took an active part in the establishment of the Royal Hibernian Academy, was one of the three artists entrusted with the choice of the first members of that body, and was elected its first President in 1823. Ashford resided for many years in College Green, but about 1790 he built for himself a house at Sandymount, designed by his friend James Gandon, and there he passed the rest of his life. Having acquired a competency by his art, he painted but little during his later years. His tenure of the Presidency of the Academy was but short, and he did not live to see, or to contribute to, its first exhibition. He died at his house, Sandymount Park, on



17th April, 1824, aged 78, and was buried in Donnybrook churchyard. On the 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st May following his death his pictures, drawings and sketches were sold by auction in Dublin, pursuant to his will, dated 26th August, 1823. The witnesses to the will were William Cuming (*q.v.*) the portrait painter, and his brother, Hugh Cuming, public notary. During his long career as an artist, Ashford produced a large number of works, and many of them were engraved, notably in Milton's "Views." His pictures justify the reputation he enjoyed as the foremost landscape painter of his time in Ireland.

He left two sons, William and Daniel, and a daughter, Anne to whom he bequeathed his house at Sandymount. His son Daniel Ashford exhibited at Allen's in Dame Street in 1800, but nothing further is known of him as an artist, and he probably worked only as an amateur. In the census of 1821 he is described as "Limner and Gentleman," and was then living at No. 16 Ballsbridge. He died on 22nd November, 1842, leaving, among others, a son, William, who for many years was an apothecary and general practitioner at Ballsbridge, and died at his residence, No. 1 Serpentine Avenue, on 15th July, 1892, in his 80th year. A pillar memorial to him was erected at Irishtown in 1893, in commemoration of his services for half a century to the poor of the parish.

A portrait of William Ashford, by William Cuming, is in the Council Room of the Royal Hibernian Academy, and a drawing by Comerford was engraved by T. Nugent and published in London in 1803.

Five Views in Charleville Forest. Ex. Dublin, 1801.

Jacques contemplating the Wounded Stag. Soc. Artists, London, 1790; B.I., 1808.

Celia and Orlando. R.A., 1795; B.I., 1806; Royal Arcade, 1821; R.H.A., 1826, after the artist's death.

- Opening of the Ringsend Docks, 13th April, 1796, with Lord Camden conferring knighthood on Sir John Macartney. Ex. Dublin, 1800; R.A., 1804. Purchased from the artist by Francis Johnston, at whose sale in 1845 it was purchased by Rev. Dr. Spratt. Sent to the R.D.S. exhibition, 1861, by T. M. Ray.
- The Pigeon House, with departure of mail wherries and embarkation of troops. [Earl of Mayo, Palmerstown.] Formerly in the collection of Dr. J. J. Kenny, Rutland Square, sold in 1900.
- View of Dublin Bay from the Pigeon House. Auction, Littledale, Dublin, 15th June, 1853.
- View of Dublin from Blackrock. Auction, Littledale, 15th June, 1853.
- View of part of the Bay of Dublin. B.I., 1808.
- View of Dublin Harbour from the back of Clontarf. B.I., 1809.
- View of Dublin Bay from the Royal Charter School, Clontarf. Painted in 1794. [National Gallery of Ireland.]
- View of Dublin Bay, Ireland's Eye and Lambay, from the Hill of Howth. [Colonel Johnston, Kilmore, Richhill, County Armagh.] B.I., 1809.
- View of Dublin Harbour from Mount Merrion. [Viscount Powerscourt.] R.A., 1805.
- View of Dublin from the Phoenix Park. B.I., 1809.
- View on the Donnybrook Road. R.A., 1789.
- A Mill at Beggarsbush. Soc. Artists, London, 1791.
- View at Williamstown, with a party fishing, including, it is said, J. P. Curran and Colonel La Touche. [Earl of Mayo, Palmerstown.] Formerly in collection of Dr. J. J. Kenny, Rutland Square, sold in 1900.
- View in Mount Merrion Park, with Lord Fitzwilliam giving orders to his Steward. [Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.]
- View of Mount Merrion Park, with distant view of Howth and the Bay of Dublin; signed and dated 1804. [Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.]
- Three Views of Mount Merrion. [Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.]
- View of Loughlinstown. B.I., 1809.
- View of Chapelizod. Soc. Artists, Dublin, 1777.
- View of Leixlip. [National Gallery of Ireland.]
- Powerscourt Park. R.A., 1789.
- View in Avondale. R.A., 1795.
- Two Views in Lord Bessborough's Park. [Earl of Bessborough.] R.A., 1785.
- Tollymore Park. R.A., 1804; B.I., 1808.
- View of Dawson Grove. Soc. Artists, London, 1774. Engraved by B. T. Pouncey, 1776.
- Three Views of Moore Abbey. [Earl of Drogheda, Moore Abbey.] Painted for the Earl of Drogheda in 1775, for £57 9s. 3d. Soc. Artists, Dublin, 1775.